

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Summary

Prior to entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 4-7 and 20-23 were pending with claims 4, 5, 20 and 22 being independent claims and the remaining claims being dependent claims. Claims 6, 7, 21 and 23 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 4, 5, 20 and 22 are pending with claims 4, 5, 20 and 22 being independent claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of claims 4, 5, 20 and 22 in view of the amendments above and the remarks below.

Traversal of Objection

The Office Action objected to claims 6, 7, 21 and 23 because of informalities including lack of clarity and precision. In lieu of the present amendment, claims 6, 7, 21 and 23 have been canceled. As such, the objections and rejections of those claims are moot and are not discussed further herein.

Traversal of Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of claims 5 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 5 as being anticipated by Iguchi et al. (US 4,763,154, hereinafter Iguchi) because of the present invention's limitations set forth below that are not disclosed in the reference.

Independent claim 5 recites, *inter alia*, . . . "first switching signal input means for controlling the focus lens by switching between automatic focal point detection focusing and remote commands from said remote control unit, wherein said input terminal is communicably coupled to first remote command generating means for performing remote operations to control the focus lens, and wherein output signals from said first switching signal input means are multiplexed with remote command control signals output from said first remote command generating means."

Applicant respectfully submits that Iguchi fails to disclose at least the above-mentioned features of the present invention.

In rejecting claim 5, the Office Action equates the motor driver circuit 163 of Iguchi to be the relay unit and contends that "while details of the motor driver circuit 163 are not shown, there must be a first switching signal input means to interpret and translate the control signal" (Office Action, page 4). However, the motor driver circuit 163 of Iguchi does not include a component that performs "switching between automatic focal point detection focusing and remote commands from said remote control unit" as required by claim 5. Rather, as the Office Action admits, switching between automatic focal point detection focusing and remote commands from the remote control unit is performed by switch 158 of Iguchi, which is not part of the motor driver circuit 163 (Office Action, pages 4-5). Since the actual switching (between automatic focal control and manual focal control) is performed outside the motor driver circuit 163, the motor driver circuit

163 of Iguchi does not teach or suggest a relay unit that includes "first switching signal input means for controlling the focus lens by switching between

Because Iguchi lacks at least the above-noted features of the present invention, Applicant respectfully submits that Iguchi fails to disclose each and every feature recited in claim 5, and that the Office Action has failed to establish an adequate evidentiary basis to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C § 102(b).

Moreover, Independent claim 22 is directed to a focal point detection system, and was rejected for essentially the same reasons as claim 5. As such, the arguments set forth above with respect to claim 5 are applicable to claim 22.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of claims 5 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Traversal of Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 4 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iguchi in view of Kawamura et al. (US 6,219,098, hereinafter Kawamura). Independent claims 4 and 20 are directed to a relay unit and a focal point detection unit and were rejected essentially under the same interpretation and reasons as claims 5 and 22 respectively. As mentioned above, Iguchi fails to teach, suggest, or show all the elements of independent claims 5 and 22. Additionally, Kawamura also fails to show, suggest, or teach the features not shown by Iguchi.

Thus, Iguchi and Kawamura, separately or in any combination (which Applicant does not admit are combinable) fails to show, suggest, or teach all the features of claims 4 and 20, which were rejected essentially under the same interpretation and reasons as claims 5 and 22.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection of claims 4 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submits that all of the claims pending in the application meet the requirements for patentability and respectfully request that the Examiner indicate allowance of such claims at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

In addition, please deduct or credit any underpayment or overpayment of fees associated with submission of this response to Deposit Account Number **502456**.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner may contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at (949) 932-3329.

Respectfully submitted,

7/2/08

/Sivon Kalminov/

Date

Sivon Kalminov, Reg. No. 40,042
Attorney for Applicants

Canon U.S.A. Inc., Intellectual Property Division
15975 Alton Parkway
Irvine, CA 92618-3731
Fax: (949) 932-3560